

San Bernardino County Sun (<http://www.sbsun.com>)

Devore project a big boost to IE mobility

By The Editorial Board, San Bernardino County Sun

Thursday, May 26, 2016



There was much hoopla last weekend surrounding the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority's opening of its Expo Line extension to Santa Monica and the beach.

That followed the celebrations in March when Metro extended its Gold Line east from Sierra Madre to Azusa.

The two light-rail extensions provide big boosts to mobility for commuters who can use them. And they give some measure of relief to car commuters by taking some motorists off the

freeways.

Meanwhile, a less acclaimed but no less important improvement in mobility debuted in the Inland Empire. The Devore Interchange improvement project was completed after 20 years of planning and three years of construction.

The \$324 million project added a new lane in each direction, two miles of truck bypass lanes in each direction, 17 new bridges and a new connector where the 15 and 215 freeways meet. Additionally, 50 lane-miles of deteriorated pavement were reconstructed near the Cajon Pass.

The improvements are expected to reduce commuting time through the Cajon Pass by as much as 30 minutes, or perhaps as much as an hour.

That will have a huge impact.

One likely result will be accelerated economic growth for the High Desert. Easier movement through the pass will make it possible for more businesses to locate on the High Desert side. If that happens, it should chip away at the 60 percent-plus of the High Desert workforce that commutes through the Cajon Pass.

For those who drive through the pass to get to work, the time knocked off the daily drive will improve their quality of life.

Precious leisure time will be saved by those from the population centers of the Inland Empire and beyond who drive over the Cajon pass to get to Las Vegas, the Mojave Desert and its national parks, the Sierras and elsewhere for recreation. And the new lanes will improve cargo movement for businesses on both sides of the pass.

Kudos to Caltrans, the San Bernardino Associated Governments and their contractors, who delivered the

project 18 months ahead of schedule. The rerouting of traffic around construction areas as the project progressed was quite a feat in itself.

URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/opinion/20160526/devore-project-a-big-boost-to-ie-mobility>

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Community deputy program to be implemented at Mt. Baldy and San Antonio Heights

By Neil Nisperos, Inland Valley Daily Bulletin

Thursday, May 26, 2016

SAN ANTONIO HEIGHTS >> The San Bernardino County [Sheriff's Department](#) will begin the Mt. Baldy/San Antonio Heights Community Deputy Program on June 11 to better serve residents in those communities.

The program will be under the oversight of the [sheriff's station](#) in Fontana.

The purpose of the program, according to the sheriff's department, is to deliver high quality law enforcement services, work in partnership with the community, and improve the quality of life for residents, business owners and visitors.

Two full-time deputies will be assigned to the program. Deputy Richard Farrow has been assigned to the program since January and has been responsible for many of the initial successes. In June, deputy Patrick Durham will be assigned to the program and work with Farrow.

A community office for the deputies will be outfitted this summer at 2436 North Euclid Drive, in San Antonio Heights.

The deputies will be equipped with four-wheel-drive vehicles to enable them to respond to calls in inclement weather and remote areas, officials said in a statement.

They will be devoted to providing more proactive patrols and implementing partnerships with the community to develop effective crime prevention strategies, according to the sheriff's department.

The deputies also will supervise and manage the San Antonio Heights Citizens on Patrol Unit and the West Valley Search & Rescue Team, according to the sheriff's department.

URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/government-and-politics/20160526/community-deputy-program-to-be-implemented-at-mt-baldy-and-san-antonio-heights>

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Deputy shooting of armed Blue Jay man was justified, DA rules

By Beatriz Valenzuela, San Bernardino Sun

Friday, May 27, 2016



BLUE JAY >> The San Bernardino County District Attorney's Office determined two sheriff's deputies were justified in shooting a reportedly suicidal man armed with two shotguns in Blue Jay last year.

On Jan. 22, 2015, San Bernardino County sheriff's deputies Jason Mascetti and Robert Maestas shot Perry Scott Prather, 57, outside a home in the 400 block of Milburn Road in Blue Jay after Prather reportedly came out of his home armed with a shotgun in each hand and allegedly raised one of the firearms

"to his shoulder in a firing position," according to DA's Office case evaluation report. Pranther survived the shooting.

A neighbor called law enforcement around 1:30 a.m., after reportedly receiving a call from Pranther's wife stating her husband was upset.

She allegedly told the caller Prather had "applied multiple Fentanyl patches to his body, had one or more guns and told the spouse to leave the house and not look back," according to the report.

The caller also indicated Pranther was allegedly "armed and would possibly be combative with responding officers," the report said.

The deputies and a sergeant approached the home. Maestas looked through a window and spotted Prather inside holding a shotgun, the report indicates. The three then pulled back to a safer location.

Authorities called the home and used their patrol vehicle's public address system to convince Prather to come out the home.

When Prather eventually exited the home, deputies could see he was reportedly holding a shotgun in each hand and was walking toward the sergeant's vehicle,

Despite numerous demands to drop the firearms, Prather continued to walk toward the deputies and allegedly raised one of the shotguns. Deputies Mascetti and Maestas then shot Pranther.

Through an investigation, authorities learned Prather may have been depressed due being unemployed, going on disability and having to care for his spouse who suffered from a severe medical condition.

Drug Court celebrates recovery, reduced recidivism

Posted: Thursday, May 26, 2016 7:45 pm

The County of San Bernardino Superior Court held its sixth annual Drug Court celebration at the County of San Bernardino Justice Center Jury Room on Friday, May 13, celebrating the completion of the program and recovery from addiction by over 100 participants county-wide.

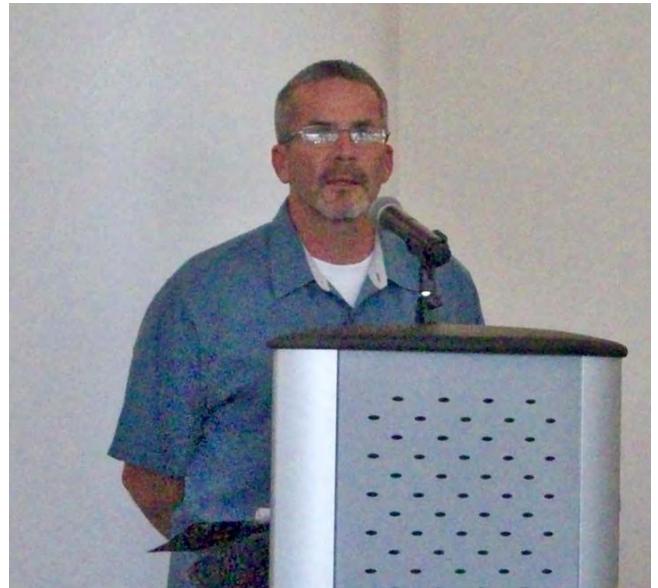
The celebration was led by Commissioner Ronald J. Gilbert and Treatment Court Coordinator Deborah Cima, and highlighted the success of several drug court graduates as told through the experiences of their loved ones.

“Nothing we do is in isolation. Every person touches someone else, and the addict affects addicts’ families, their spouses and their children,” said Gilbert about this year’s focus on the stories of the recovering addicts’ families.

Cima began by pointing out that the program, which substitutes traditional prosecution with drug-addiction treatment by offering offenders reduced charges if they complete a rigorous 18-month rehabilitation program which is followed by a six-month probation period, has had great success in reducing recidivism among drug court participants. This reduction in recidivism is seen in not only program graduates but also those who dropped out of the program.

Of the over 280 participants served county-wide in 2015-16 51 percent graduated and 117 gained employment.

According to Cima, research analysis of the program’s recidivism rates found that, of the three courts studied, there was an average of just 18 percent recidivism among graduates two years following program completion. The recidivism rate for all participants, including those who did not complete, was at 34 percent. The recidivism rate for those who had no participation in the drug court program was 63 percent.



Sharing his life changes

Recovering addict and 2016 Drug Court graduate Mike K. shares the dramatic changes in his life since participating in the San Bernardino County Superior Court Drug Court which celebrated its 2015-16 graduates with a special ceremony on Friday, May 13.

"This says that while not everybody makes it through Drug Court - it's a very difficult program and life gets in the way sometimes - it doesn't mean they're not successful," Cima said. "They've gotten something out of it that helps them change their life. They're removed from the criminal justice system, which is just one of our goals along with community safety."

The Drug Court graduates and the loved ones who spoke each expressed their deep gratitude to the program and its leadership for helping them through those dramatic life changes.

The stories of addiction were tearfully told by siblings, children and spouses of recovering addicts who experienced their loved-one's downfall, the difficult journeys to recovery and dramatically new lives now being lived.

When Natalia Burnell, wife of Drug Court graduate Michael Burnell, spoke of their life while Michael was living in addiction she said, "I never knew what the next minute would bring to our lives. It was painful and I had to completely remove myself from him."

"With drug court I saw it was a new and different experience," Natalia said of Michael's recovery. "We realize we are just at the beginning of our journey but the first step is the hardest and we have accomplished it."

"It's thanks to drug court that I can stand before you today a clean, respectful man of recovery. I'm clean and sober and a free man because of drug court," 2015 graduate David B. said.

San Bernardino County Sun (<http://www.sbsun.com>)

Judge to hear argument for dismissal of San Bernardino County corruption case

By Joe Nelson, The Sun

Thursday, May 26, 2016

Another [motion](#) seeking dismissal of San Bernardino County's Colonies public corruption case will be heard Friday in San Bernardino Superior Court, this time on grounds prosecutors with the state Attorney General's Office did not save e-mails a defense attorney maintains were evidence.

Defense attorney Stephen Larson, who is representing defendant Jeff Burum in the 5-year-old criminal case, filed a motion May 13 seeking dismissal.

Burum, a Rancho Cucamonga developer, and three former top county officials were [indicted](#) in May 2011 in connection with the far-reaching public corruption case that originated a decade ago. Also charged in the case are former county Supervisor Paul Biane, former Assistant Assessor Jim Erwin, and Mark Kirk, former chief of staff for erstwhile county Supervisor Gary Ovitt.

All four defendants maintain their innocence.

Prosecutors allege Burum bribed the other three defendants and former Board of Supervisors Chairman Bill Postmus in November 2006 to fix the landmark \$102 million settlement between the county and Burum's Rancho Cucamonga investor group, Colonies Partners LP., in Colonies' favor.

Burum, prosecutors allege, paid each of the defendants and Postmus \$100,000 bribes, disguised as contributions to sham political action committees secretly controlled by the other defendants, within a year of the settlement.

The settlement ended a nearly 5-year legal battle between the county and Colonies Partners over who was responsible for paying for construction of a flood control basin at a more than 400-acre residential and commercial development in Upland, Colonies at San Antonio and Colonies Crossroads, respectively.

In March 2011, Postmus entered into a [plea agreement](#) with prosecutors, admitting he accepted the bribe from Burum in exchange for his vote approving the settlement. He pleaded guilty to 10 felonies in connection with the Colonies case and a companion corruption case in which he was accused of abusing his power as county assessor for political gain.

Since the indictment, the defense has filed numerous motions challenging the evidence and charges filed in the case. It led to some of the charges, including the key conspiracy charge, being dismissed.

Defense attorneys have also attacked the credibility of Postmus, an admitted methamphetamine addict, who they say is unreliable and has provided inconsistent information about the case to investigators.

Prosecutors have consistently declined to comment on the case, saying it is against policy to comment on any pending litigation.

In his latest motion, Larson alleges prosecutors at the state Attorney General's Office, which is jointly prosecuting the case with the San Bernardino County District Attorney's Office, did not save e-mails Larson had requested and which Larson maintains were exculpatory evidence.

The e-mails, Larson argues in his motion, show that prosecutors had been communicating with former San Bernardino County Counsel Ruth Stringer and Deputy County Counsel Mitch Norton prior to the April 2011 grand jury proceedings, and had knowledge Stringer and Norton had reversed their opinions regarding the settlement since 2006, later believing the settlement was legitimate and was actually a savings to taxpayers.

But prosecutors, Larson alleges, steered Stringer's and Norton's grand jury testimony in one direction: their position at the time of the 2006 settlement. Prosecutors, Larson maintains, did not question the two on their opinion of the settlement in the months and years after the settlement, after re-evaluating the evidence.

The hearing is scheduled before Judge Michael A. Smith.

URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/general-news/20160526/judge-to-hear-argument-for-dismissal-of-san-bernardino-county-corruption-case>

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ENVIRONMENT: Gas pipeline decision delayed

By IMRAN GHORI

2016-05-26 11:49:55



The California Public Utilities Commission has once again delayed a vote on a plan to build a 65-mile natural gas pipeline through San Bernardino County to Moreno Valley.

The decision was delayed Thursday, May 26 to the June 9 meeting at the request of Commissioner Catherine Sandoval, who wanted more time to review it, commission spokesperson Terrie Prosper said.

The application by Southern California Gas Co. and San Diego Gas & Electric had already been postponed at the May 12 meeting. At that meeting, a majority of commissioners said they were inclined to deny the request.

The pipeline would run from a pumping station in Adelanto, in the High Desert, to one in Moreno Valley. It would roughly follow I-15 through the Cajon Pass and then run east along I-215 to San Bernardino. The final stretch would go from rural Reche Canyon Road to Moreno Valley.

The two utilities, both subsidiaries of Sempra Energy, have sought rate increases to pay for the \$621.3 million project, which they said is needed to secure a reliable source of additional natural gas.

San Bernardino city residents and officials have opposed the project, saying it would disrupt some of the city's busiest and most attractive neighbors.

Last month, an administrative law judge with the commission recommended that the project - dubbed the North-South pipeline - and rate increases be rejected, saying the utilities had failed to show that the project was needed.

In his ruling, Judge Karl Bemesderfer determined that there are less costly alternate projects that would go through more sparsely populated areas and pose less of a safety or environmental risk.

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San Bernardino County Sun (<http://www.sbsun.com>)

California should protect rights and reform laws on asset seizure

By The Editorial Board, San Bernardino County Sun

Thursday, May 26, 2016



A Los Angeles County sheriff's deputy pulled over a taco truck driver near Lancaster, searched the truck and found \$10,000. The man wasn't charged with a crime. But law-enforcement agents seized the money.

That's perfectly legal under a federal program called "equitable sharing."

It should be called "inequitable taking."

For more than a year, state Sen. Holly Mitchell, D-Los Angeles, has been trying to erase the practice that allows local and state police working with federal authorities to seize assets they suspect are linked to a crime.

As it stands now, no burden of proof is necessary, no innocent until proven guilty.

As long as state or local law enforcement officers are working with federal officials, they can bypass stricter state law that limits seizures to cases in which there is a conviction and the assets are related to the crimes.

SB 443, introduced last year by Mitchell and co-authored by Assemblyman David Hadley, R-Torrance and others, sailed through the Senate, but was voted down in the Assembly.

Why? Because powerful law enforcement groups have been lobbying hard to defeat it. They argue that civil asset forfeitures are an important crime-fighting tool that the federal government would employ with or without their help.

That doesn't justify trampling on people's rights, including their right to due process.

There is an effort to resurrect the legislation before this California legislative session ends on Aug. 31.

With it comes an opportunity for legislators who blocked the bill to now make things right, especially Southern California lawmakers who represent poor communities where, studies suggest, there is a disproportionately higher number of these civil seizures.

There are 232 California agencies that employ the lucrative practice, up from 220 two years ago, according to an American Civil Liberties Union report that detailed stories like that of the taco truck driver.

It's easy to understand why the program continues to gain popularity. It's lucrative.

One study found that between 2000 and 2013, annual payments to state and local law enforcement under the program grew from \$198 million to an astounding \$643 million.

The program fuels local police budgets and, absurdly, encourages law enforcement to abuse civil seizures by rewarding them with more money.

Under the rules, local law enforcement agencies reap 80 percent of the profits, federal agencies the other 20 percent.

No central entity tracks the money, how much is seized and how it's spent. If a victim wants the money back, it often means suing the federal government. That is a long, expensive process (and if you happen to be an undocumented immigrant, probably out of the question.)

Portrayed by law enforcement as a weapon against criminals, civil asset forfeiture is nothing but a way to pump up police budgets at the expense of folks who are not convicted and often never even charged. They aren't the only ones losing out.

According to the Drug Policy Alliance, California agencies have beefed up these federal-local teams at the expense of neighborhood patrol.

The outdated policy that was popularized during the hysteria of the War on Drugs should end. Do California legislators have the courage to end it?

URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/opinion/20160526/california-should-protect-rights-and-reform-laws-on-asset-seizure>

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San Bernardino County Sun (<http://www.sbsun.com>)**Beaumont mayor says city rocked by corruption is now on right track**

Beaumont mayor says city rocked by corruption is now on the right track

By David Danelski, The Press-Enterprise

Friday, May 27, 2016



BEAUMONT >> Fear not, Beaumont residents. You have every right to be angry. But your troubled city is on the path to recovery.

That was the message Mayor Mike Lara presented Thursday in his State of the City address, an annual lunch ritual hosted by the Beaumont Chamber of Commerce.

Given the corruption arrests last week of seven former city officials, including the longtime city manager and the recently retired police chief, Lara said this speech would be like no other.

Sure, street crime is down, and businesses are moving in. But Lara stressed the priority now is ushering in a new era of accountability and transparency in Beaumont city government.

"It's painful, embarrassing and expensive," Lara said, describing what the city's going through. "And takes way too long."

The City Council has increased its oversight of city financing and contracts, among many other measures to restore trust, he said.

"We've replaced long-term contracts and we got rid of sweetheart deals," he said.

But the task remains daunting.

The city general fund that pays for police and most other city services remains insolvent despite recent spending cuts that resulted in layoffs and pay cuts.

"We need to be on a solid financial foundation, but we are not there yet," he said.

The city also has retained outside experts to piece together how some \$300 million in bonds was spent during the 20-year leadership of former City Manager Alan Kapanicas, who left the city last year after his Palm Desert home was raided by investigators with the District Attorney's Office.

Kapanicas now faces felony embezzlement, misappropriation of public funds, and conspiracy charges. Public records show he approved more than \$1 million in bond payments to his own company.

Those bond funds are a sore point because they are debts secured by special taxes called Mello-Roos

assessments that are still being paid by thousands of Beaumont residents.

“People want to know what was done with this money,” said Lara, who promised that a city report about how the funds were used soon will be released.

Lara added that elected officials and more than a hundred city employees have done and still are doing all they can to cooperate with outside authorities investigating the city, including the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.

In fact, because of city cooperation, last week’s arrests occurred nearly a year faster than district attorney’s investigators had expected, he said.

And the city is functioning.

“City services are continuing. A hundred and twenty-six employees are committed. We are not paralyzed,” he said.

Beaumont Treasurer Nancy Carroll and council members Mark Orozco and Della Condon were not at the table with city officials.

Carroll said she boycotted the speech because it was held at the lodge of the Four Seasons gated community, and tickets for the luncheon cost \$35, putting it out of reach for many Beaumont residents.

“Gated community. Clubhouse. Thirty-five dollars per person. It should not be that way,” Carroll said in a telephone interview.

Lara countered that a video of his speech would be available for free on the city’s web page.

URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/government-and-politics/20160527/beaumont-mayor-says-city-rocked-by-corruption-is-now-on-right-track>

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LOCAL / L.A. Now

County seeks state approval on 'millionaires tax' for homeless programs



Jessica Ponce, 30, says she has been living on Crocker Street in between 3rd and 4th streets for a few months. Los Angeles County supervisors voted to take a step toward placing a "millionaires tax" on the ballot to fund homeless services. (Francine Orr / Los Angeles Times)

By [Abby Sewell](#) · Contact Reporter

MAY 17, 2016, 5:40 PM

Los Angeles County supervisors voted Tuesday to pursue state legislation that would allow them to impose a "millionaires tax" to pay for housing and services for the homeless.

The vote signaled resolution of a rift that opened between members of the county board's liberal majority on the issue last week.

The supervisors also approved a separate proposal to look at the nearly \$1 billion a year the county is

spending on homeless single adults in programs not directly related to reducing homelessness -- such as emergency medical care, mental health treatment, cash assistance and incarceration -- to see how the most chronic users of the system could be more effectively addressed.

Supervisors [Mark Ridley-Thomas](#) and [Sheila Kuehl](#) proposed lobbying the state for legislation that would give the county authority to impose a new tax on personal income over \$1 million a year to fund efforts on homelessness.

The question would still need to go to voters and receive two-thirds approval before it could take effect, but because the county does not have authority to increase income taxes, it would first require a change in state law.

A recent county-commissioned poll that looked at various possible funding measures for the November ballot found that likely voters were most supportive of the millionaires tax option, which would raise an estimated \$243 million a year, with 76% of those surveyed being supportive.

The city and county of Los Angeles passed plans earlier this year aimed at reducing the region's growing problem of homelessness, and the county has approved \$150 million in initial funding, but the source of ongoing funding to build housing and provide services remains in question. County analysts say almost \$500 million a year would be needed to make significant reductions in the countywide homeless population, which currently stands at nearly 47,000.

But Supervisor Hilda Solis last week put the brakes on the proposal to move toward a millionaires tax, raising questions about the methodology of the polling and of the most recent homeless count conducted by the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority.

She said Tuesday that the majority of her concerns had been addressed and joined Ridley-Thomas and Kuehl in voting to pursue authority for counties to impose a millionaires tax for homeless services, probably through a budget trailer bill that would take effect in July.

"We all share a common goal here," Solis said. "We know that we need to find sustainable funding to address the homeless crisis."

The state is also considering a proposal to issue \$2 billion in bonds to build 10,000 to 14,000 units of housing for mentally ill homeless people statewide. The money would be repaid over 20 to 30 years with money provided under Proposition 63, another millionaires tax that was approved by voters in 2004 to fund mental health programs. But the bond money would pay only for construction, not services or housing subsidies.

Kuehl asked that the county staff look into what effect a county tax measure might have on that state

effort, but called the potential for a new local revenue stream dedicated to homeless services "a historic opportunity."

"The county has already stepped up in a big way on homelessness," she said. "But we already know that given the magnitude of the homeless population in L.A. County, it's still insufficient."

The board's two Republicans, [Don Knabe](#) and [Michael D. Antonovich](#), voted against the proposal.

Antonovich said the proposed new tax would not address the problem and that laws should be changed to allow for more mandated mental health treatment of people who are homeless because of mental health issues.

"It is not a simple resolution that we will provide a house and therefore there will be no more homeless on our streets," he said.

The board voted unanimously to approve the proposal by Solis and Knabe to examine existing spending on services to the homeless.

Dozens of advocates and services providers urged the board to pass both proposals.

Marsha Temple, who runs the nonprofit Integrated Recovery Network, said the homeless crisis represents "the breakdown of society stretched out before our very eyes."

"We must do everything within our power to end this crisis," she said. "The cost of doing nothing is too high."

Lola Smallwood Cuevas, director of the Los Angeles Black Worker Center, told the story of one of the center's members, a construction worker who spent seven months living in his van down the street from a job site.

"This is not a one-time fix, this is not a one-vote fix," she said. "These problems weren't made yesterday."

If the county does receive state approval to pursue a millionaires tax, the board would need to vote again to place it on November's ballot.

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This article is related to: [Homelessness](#), [Don Knabe](#), [Mark Ridley-Thomas](#), [Michael Antonovich](#), [Sheila](#)

LOCAL / L.A. Now

Former top attorney sues L.A. County over ouster



Mark Saladino, the former county counsel, has sued Los Angeles County to get his job back. (lacounty.gov)

By [Abby Sewell](#)

MAY 23, 2016, 4:04 PM

Mark Saladino, the former top attorney for Los Angeles County, has filed a lawsuit against the county and the Board of Supervisors, saying that the supervisors violated the state's open meetings law when they pushed him out of the position.

The suit seeks to have him reinstated to his old job.

Saladino, who had previously been county treasurer and tax collector, served nine months as county counsel. He abruptly announced in June 2015 that he was resigning from the post and returning to the Department of Treasurer and Tax Collector in a management role below his old position as head of the department.

The supervisors voted in September 2014 to appoint Saladino to the top attorney post, with Supervisor

Mark Ridley-Thomas casting the lone dissenting vote.

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Two of the other supervisors who voted in favor of appointing Saladino, [Gloria Molina](#) and [Zev Yaroslavsky](#), retired from the board shortly thereafter and were replaced by Hilda Solis and [Sheila Kuehl](#).

In a complaint filed last week, Saladino alleged that the newly configured Board of Supervisors decided to terminate him in a closed-door meeting on June 9, 2015, but did not report the decision to the public as required by the Ralph M. Brown Act.

Instead, a public report on the closed meeting said a scheduled discussion of department head performance evaluations was postponed to the following week.

According to Saladino's complaint, the day after the meeting, he was called into a meeting with Supervisors [Michael D. Antonovich](#) and Solis and private attorney Louis "Skip" Miller, in which they told him that the board "had discussed and decided to immediately remove him from the duties of county counsel" and that he would be reassigned. The supervisors told him to issue a press release saying he had requested the reassignment, he said.

Saladino argued that the June 9 meeting report "falsely relays the message that no discussion took place."

"The decision to terminate, dismiss, accept the resignation of, or affect the employment status of county counsel is certainly a reportable action under the Brown Act," the complaint said.

County spokesman David Sommers declined to comment on the lawsuit.

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But in a letter sent to Saladino's attorney, Robert C. Baker, and attached as an exhibit in the lawsuit complaint, Miller argued that the board had not taken action to terminate Saladino and that they were not required to report a decision to transfer him to another position.

"As you know, there was no change in Mr. Saladino's compensation, he kept his automobile allowance, and he asked to be transferred back to his old Department," Miller wrote.

Under Saladino's employment contract, he was paid \$288,915 as county counsel. According to Sommers, Saladino's current monthly salary is \$18,250, or \$219,000 a year.

Saladino said that at the June 10 meeting, he asked to be transferred to one of two other positions

"commensurate with his rank, experience and skills that would have allowed him to transition out of the position of county counsel with less damage to his good name and reputation."

County Chief Executive Sachi Hamai initially agreed to one of the requested transfers, but it was blocked by Ridley-Thomas, Saladino said in the complaint.

He said he then agreed to take the lower position in his old department, rather than being placed on administrative leave until another position could be found for him.

The suit seeks a court declaration that the supervisors violated the Brown Act and to have his removal from the county counsel position overturned.

ALSO

[Southern California Gas Co. ordered to stop cleaning Porter Ranch-area homes](#)

[As Obama tours Hiroshima, bombing survivors in Little Tokyo hope for 'more than words'](#)

[Muslim group on helping San Bernardino shooters' family: No one should suffer for the sins of others](#)

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This article is related to: [Mark Ridley-Thomas](#), [Gloria Molina](#), [Michael Antonovich](#)